

All **modal verbs** have some special characteristics you should remember:

1. **they do not take an -S** in the third person singular: you cannot say *he cans* or *she wills*.

2. **they are followed by an infinitive without 'to'** in most cases, except **OUGHT TO**.

Ex: You ought to study more more if you want to pass the exam.

3. Also in most **cases they function like auxiliaries** for questions and negatives:

ex: Can you speak louder, please ? No, I cannot speak louder.

4. Also in most cases **they do not have a past form**, so we need different forms like **BE ABLE TO**: I will be able to speak French in two months or

BE ALLOWED TO : You will be allowed to go out as soon as you are eighteen.

5. Sometimes modal verbs can also be followed by **a perfect infinitive**.

Ex: it **MUST HAVE BEEN** the rain, which talks about the past.

The Modal verbs are **CAN / COULD / MAY / MIGHT / MUST / SHALL / SHOULD / OUGHT TO / WILL / WOULD**

Modal	Example	Uses
Can	They can control their own budgets.	Ability / Possibility
	We can't fix it.	Inability / Impossibility
	Can I smoke here?	Asking for permission
	Can you help me?	Request
Could	Could I borrow your dictionary?	Asking for permission.
	Could you say it again more slowly?	Request
	We could try to fix it ourselves.	Suggestion
	I think we could have another Gulf War.	Future possibility
	He gave up his old job so he could work for us.	Ability in the past
May	May I have another cup of coffee?	Asking for permission
	China may become a major economic power.	Future possibility
Might	We'd better phone tomorrow, they might be eating their dinner now.	Present possibility
	They might give us a 10% discount.	Future possibility
Must	We must say good-bye now.	Necessity / Obligation
	They mustn't disrupt the work more than necessary.	Prohibition

Ought to	We ought to employ a professional writer.	Saying what's right or correct(advice)
Shall (More common in the UK than the US)	Shall I help you with your luggage? Shall we say 2.30 then? Shall I do that or will you?	Offer Suggestion Asking what to do
Should	We should sort out this problem at once. I think we should check everything again. Profits should increase next year.	Saying what's right or correct Recommending action Uncertain prediction
Will	I can't see any taxis so I'll walk. I'll do that for you if you like. I'll get back to you first thing on Monday. Profits will increase next year.	Instant decisions Offer Promise Certain prediction
Would	Would you mind if I brought a colleague with me? Would you pass the salt please? Would you mind waiting a moment? Would you like to play golf this Friday? "Would you prefer tea or coffee?" - "I'd like tea please."	Asking for permission Request Invitation

The verbs **used to** and **needn't** can also be used like modal verbs. Se usa **used to + verbo** para hablar de hábitos ya pasados y para hablar de estados pasados

Hábito: I used to play the guitar. Significa que antes tocabas la guitarra pero ya no.

Estado: I used to live in London. Significa que antes vivias en Londres pero ya no.

Sujeto + needn't + verbo infinitivo (sin to): You needn't arrive early. No hace falta que llegues temprano (no es necesario hacer algo).

HAVE TO is a semi-modal: She has to come home early. They had to use school uniform when they were children (in the affirmative form the meaning is OBLIGATION in the negative form the meaning is ABSENCE OF OBLIGATION: You don't have to tell George (no tienes por que decírselo a George si no quieres) You mustn't tell George (no debes decírselo, te lo prohíbo)